



**OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Community Services Department  
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## Annexation FAQs

**QUESTION:** What is annexation?

**ANSWER:** Annexation is the act of adding real property to the boundaries of an incorporated municipality, i.e. City of Cocoa. See Florida Statute 171.011 thru 171.094.

**QUESTION:** Does my property qualify for annexation?

**ANSWER:** Per the Florida Statute, a governmental entity can only annex properties that abut property located within that city's boundaries. The statute also strictly prohibits enclaves or pockets of unincorporated areas.

**QUESTION:** Why does the City want to annex our land?

**ANSWER:** A municipality may wish to annex land to ensure sound urban development and accommodation to growth as well as ensure that municipal services can be provided to those areas. A municipality can only annex land that is contiguous with a part of the boundary of the municipality. A city might wish to annex land to clean up irregular boundaries and eliminate enclaves. A city will also annex land at the request of the property owner.

**QUESTION:** How is property annexed?

**ANSWER:** Annexations can occur in several ways:

Property owners contiguous to the City may initiate voluntary annexation proceedings. A petition signed by all property owners in the area being considered for annexation must be submitted to the City of Cocoa. The Property is annexed upon adoption of an annexation ordinance by Cocoa City Council.

The City can initiate annexation proceedings through an annexation referendum of all registered electors residing in the area being considered for annexation. The annexation passes with a simple majority of registered voters voting for annexation.

The City can also initiate annexation proceedings in non-residential areas. The City may annex an area when the owners of more than 50% of the acreage and more than 50% of property owner's consent in the area are consenting to the annexation.

**QUESTION:** What are the benefits of being annexed into the City of Cocoa?

**ANSWER:** All residents and business owners within Cocoa city limits receive a 10% reduction on the water utility bill as well as a 25% reduction on sewer and reclaimed water. Additional intangible benefits of annexing into Cocoa include responsive police and fire services, proactive business environment and code enforcement, streamlined and competitive permit fees, additional representation from local district council member, and available local economic development and community redevelopment grant and incentive programs as well as marketing and promotion of available commercial and industrial property located within Cocoa city limits.

**QUESTIONS:** How will annexation impact the zoning on my property?

**ANSWER:** Zoning will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**QUESTION:** What about City garbage collection services and rates?

**ANSWER:** Properties within Cocoa city limits receive trash pick-up twice per week, with days varying depending on the location. Yard waste is serviced on Wednesdays and yard waste piles serviced on Thursdays. All services are performed by Waste Management, as contracted by the City of Cocoa. Rates for residential and commercial properties are approximately \$15.19 and \$33.63 respectively, to include garbage, recycling, and green waste pick up.

**QUESTION:** Will the City require me to connect to the sewer system?

**ANSWER:** Connecting to the Cocoa sewer is not required; however all properties have the ability to connect at the owner's discretion. There is an impact fee and sewer connection charge. More information can be obtained by contacting Cocoa Utilities Department at (321) 433-8704.

**QUESTION:** Will my water utility costs increase if I'm annexed into Cocoa city limits?

**ANSWER:** Water utility bills will not increase if annexed into Cocoa city limits. In fact, Cocoa residents and businesses will receive a 10% reduction in the water utility bill for annexing into Cocoa city limits.

**QUESTION:** When will I see the change in my taxes reflected?

**ANSWER:** Properties must be assessed by the Brevard County Property Appraiser by January 1. All properties annexed prior to June 1 will reflect the new millage rate on the final property tax bill mailed on November 1.

**QUESTION:** How much is the City of Cocoa's mileage rate?

**ANSWER:** Effective October 1, 2015, the City of Cocoa's 2015 mileage rate is currently 5.979% of the assessed value of the property.

**QUESTION:** What are the costs associated with annexing into the City of Cocoa?

**ANSWER:** While there is no cost to the property owner for processing an annexation request, tax rates and certain fees and charges do differ between Brevard County and the City of Cocoa.

**QUESTION:** Will my property taxes change upon annexation?

**ANSWER:** The 2015 Brevard County MSTU (MUNICIPAL SERVICES/COUNTY MSTU) millage rate, to include Fire Control, Law Enforcement, and Road & Bridge, is 2.2999 combined. Once annexed into Cocoa city limits, those tax rates will be replaced with one flat tax rate labeled City of Cocoa using a millage rate of 5.9790, or \$5.979 for every \$1,000 of taxable value. All other imposed taxes on your property tax bill will remain the same. (Example: A property with a taxable value of \$200,000 located in unincorporated Brevard County will have a total property tax of \$3,106. That same property located within Cocoa city limits would have a total property tax of \$3,841.)

**QUESTION:** What will my Fire Assessment Fee be?

**ANSWER:** Both the City of Cocoa and Brevard County impose an annual fire assessment fee. Fees vary based on property type. (Example: RESIDENTIAL: A single-family residence of 1,500 square feet located within unincorporated Brevard County has an annual fire assessment of \$177.87. Within Cocoa City limits, the same single-family residence has a fire assessment fee of \$187.93 annually. COMMERCIAL: A commercial parcel with a 9,000 square foot building on a one (1) acre parcel with a retail use valued at \$670,000 and located within unincorporated Brevard County has an annual fire assessment fee of \$982.60. Within Cocoa City limits, the same parcel has a fire assessment fee of \$1,114.88 annually.)

**QUESTION:** Will annexation affect school district boundaries?

**ANSWER:** Annexation into Cocoa city limits will not affect school boundaries which are established by the Brevard County Public School Board.

**QUESTION:** How will annexation affect law and fire protection services?

**ANSWER:** Law enforcement and fire protection services will not be affected. The City of Cocoa and Brevard County entered into a mutual aid agreement for shared fire services to ensure that all residents in the unincorporated areas are receiving services, whether from the County or the City. You may already receive services provided by Cocoa Fire Department. The unit responding to your requests is dependent upon the drive time to the nearest fire station, and availability of service. Once annexed into Cocoa city limits, the responding unit for law enforcement will be the Cocoa Police Department. The Cocoa Police Department has 3.7 officers per 1,000 persons versus Brevard County with 1.67 sheriff officers per 1,000 persons within the unincorporated area.

**QUESTION:** How will annexation affect my home-based business?

**ANSWER:** The City of Cocoa has a home-based business ordinance, which regulates home-based business activities. See Appendix A, Article XIII, Section 17 of the Cocoa City Code.

**QUESTION:** I have livestock. Can I keep them?

**ANSWER:** Livestock is permitted in the Residential Agricultural (RA) zoning designation only.

**QUESTION:** Will I have to go through the City's permit process if I've already received a permit from the County?

**ANSWER:** No; if you are currently in the Brevard County permitting process, you are not required to enter into the City of Cocoa's permitting process.